



Sample Characteristics— 1999 Cohort

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This report compares the WorkFirst Study respondents with all people receiving TANF in March 1999. The study sample was drawn from the statewide list of adults receiving welfare assistance in March 1999. Survey respondents were interviewed between December 1999 and August 2000 (2000 survey) and again between February and May 2001 (2001 survey).

There were 47,988 adults receiving welfare assistance in Washington State in March 1999. Of this group, 3,028 individuals were interviewed for the 2000 survey and 1,955 of these respondents were re-interviewed for the 2001 survey.

This report describes the differences between three groups: the sample frame of all welfare recipients in March 1999, all participants in the 2000 survey, and the participants in the 2001 survey (who also completed the 2000 survey).

All characteristics are from administrative records for welfare recipients as of March 1999.

FINDINGS

- **Generally, the 2000 and 2001 survey samples are a good representation of the sample frame of all welfare recipients.**
- **Certain ethnic minorities and languages are underrepresented in the samples, including Blacks/African-Americans, Asian/Pacific Islanders, and languages other than Spanish. Legal immigrants are also underrepresented in the survey samples. Some of these differences are the result translation capability.¹**
- **Northeast Washington is over-represented in the surveys and King County is underrepresented.**
- **Survey respondents had somewhat higher levels of earned income in March 1999 and lower TANF and Food Stamp benefits than did the entire caseload.**
- **Individuals with sanctions in March 1999 were less likely to participate in the survey.**

¹ The survey was translated into Russian and Spanish. Also, an Asian language interpreter contacted some families who then agreed to complete English language surveys.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF 1999 COHORT SAMPLE FRAME, 2000 SURVEY AND 2001 SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

	Sample Frame n=47,988	Wave 1 n=3,045	Wave 2 n=1,955
Family Size	3.3	3.2*	3.2*
Number of Children	2	2	2
Number of Adults	1	1	1
Age of Youngest Child	5	5	5
Respondent Age	31	31	31
Highest Grade Completed	11.1	11.5*	11.7*
Earned GED	12%	13%	12%
Race			
White	68%	75%*	77%*
Black/African American	11%	9%	7%*
Native American	5%	4%*	4%*
Asian/Pacific Islander	6%	3%*	2%*
Hispanic	9%	9%	9%
Other	10%	9%	9%
Language			
English	89%	95%*	94%*
Russian	3%	2%*	2%*
Vietnamese	2%	0.2%*	0.2%*
Spanish	2%	2%	2%
Other	4%	1%*	2%*
Needs Interpreter	8%	4%*	4%*
Gender			
Male	7%	5%*	5%*
Female	93%	95%*	95%*
Marital Status			
Married	21%	19%*	20%
Single	9%	8%*	7%*
Divorced	15%	17%*	17%*
Never Married	41%	42%	40%
Region			
Northeast Washington	18%	20%*	21%*
Southeast and SouthCentral WA	12%	12%	13%
North Puget Sound	10%	10%	10%
King County	20%	16%*	15%*
Pierce and Kitsap Counties	19%	19%	18%
Southwest Washington	21%	22%	23%
Citizenship			
Citizen	88%	96%*	94%*
Legal Immigrant	12%	4%*	6%*
Disability Type			
Disabled	3%	3%	3%
Chemical Dependence	1%	0.3%*	1%
Mental or Physical Incapacity	2%	2%	2%
Needs Special Assistance	2%	2%	2%
Received Medicaid	99.7%	99.8%	99.3%*

* Value is significantly different from sample frame at $p < 0.05$

	Sample Frame n=47,988	Wave 1 n=3,045	Wave 2 n=1,955
Welfare History			
Continuing Welfare Recipient	33%	35%*	34%
New Welfare Recipient	3%	3%	3%
Repeat Welfare Recipient	64%	62%	62%
Program Type			
Regular Parent	81%	83%*	83%*
Employable Parent	17%	15%*	15%*
Sanctions			
Initial Sanction	2%	1%*	1%*
40% Sanction	4%	3%*	3%*
Any WorkFirst Sanction	6%	5%*	4%*
WorkFirst Exemption Status	12%	13%	12%
Number of Spans on WF	2.4	2.4	2.5*
Length of Current Span (months)	26	27	28
Mar 1999 TANF Benefit Amount	\$469	\$452*	\$444*
Mar 1999 Food Stamp Benefit Amount	\$231	\$224*	\$223*
Total Months on TANF	14.0	14.1	14.2
Total Months on AFDC and TANF	52	53*	55*
Unearned Income	\$41	\$49	\$40
Earned Income	\$157	\$175*	\$191*
Actual Hours Worked	23	26*	29*

* Value is significantly different from sample frame at $p < 0.05$